Disaster Planning and Policies

Course Overview: Demographic changes, human settlement patterns, land-use decisions, and political and social policy dynamics have increased vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters. Planning and policy processes and interventions can help reduce disaster vulnerabilities and increase resilience at every stage of the disaster management cycle: disaster mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery.

Course Format:
The course will be divided into four modules relating to planning and policy processes corresponding to these four traditional phases of disaster management. Throughout the semester, particular attention will be paid to how disaster planning and policy efforts can increase and promote resilience and reduce vulnerabilities. This course will be designed to serve as an upper level Bachelor’s degree course and could be easily adapted to the graduate level with the addition of other reading materials, and will be based on a model of 15 three-hour sessions, separated into one session a week for 15 weeks. Alternatively, the course material could be broken up into a twice-a-week or three-times-a-week format if desired.

Course Objectives: This course proposes to provide students with the following:

a) Understanding of the roles of the various phases of disaster management and issues concerning planning and policies in those phases.
b) Understanding of comprehensive emergency management from a planning and policy perspective
c) Understanding of the role of federal, state, and local governments in disaster planning and policies.
d) Knowledge of mitigation planning and policy strategies.
e) Understanding of comprehensive emergency management and related plans
f) Understanding of factors affecting short and long-term recovery and rebuilding and the role of planners and policy-makers.
g) Understanding of the factors that give rise to disaster vulnerabilities (e.g. natural, physical, social, economic, policies, and governance).
h) Understanding of the factors that give rise to differential vulnerabilities and levels of community resilience
i) Knowledge and capabilities to assess and manage these vulnerabilities through disaster planning and policy-making.
j) Data, methods, tools, and geospatial techniques (including GIS) that can enhance vulnerability assessments and knowledge building.
k) Competencies to utilize mapping in mitigation planning and response operations

1 School of Public Administration, Florida Atlantic University
2 School of Urban and Regional Planning, Florida Atlantic University
Course Textbooks:


Additional Reading

Additional reading assignments have been selected from articles and Web Sites. Where possible, the weblinks to the articles are noted, but they may require permission/access from the instructor’s library/school.

Students are also encouraged to use Internet information sources and may subscribe to discussion lists for a variety of disaster organizations and related professions and receive email notification of major earthquakes and other disasters, federal disaster relief announcements, job announcements, research opportunities, and other relevant professional news from the field.

The instructor should encourage students to become familiar with the following sites:

- [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) - for basic information on the federal emergency management system, reports, legal documents, training and planning documents, and status reports on disasters, as well as links to state and local emergency management agencies (including a link to the Florida Emergency Management Agency).
- [www.colorado.edu/hazards](http://www.colorado.edu/hazards) - for information regarding specific hazards, full texts of the Natural Hazards Center’s series of working papers and quick response reports for recent disasters, and other information sources.
- [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) - for basic information on the Department of Homeland Security, including FEMA, and its constituent agencies and directorates.
- [www.iaem.com](http://www.iaem.com) - for information on the International Association of Emergency Managers (including IAEM Europa, IAEM Oceana, and IAEM Asia), job listings, commentary on current policy issues.
- [www.drc.udel.edu](http://www.drc.udel.edu) - for applied social science research related to disasters, full texts of some of the Disaster Research Center’s publications, including reports to FEMA and other government agencies.
- [www.emforum.org](http://www.emforum.org) - Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP) forum. Holds Internet workshops on a broad range of emergency management issues and maintains an archive of transcripts.

Class Format

Instructors can structure the classes as a mix of lectures, class discussions, and student presentations depending on the level at which it is being taught. They could also request select guest speakers and a site visit to the local Emergency Operations Center for the topic on Emergency Operations Planning.
would benefit students. Instructors can also use e-portals such as Blackboard to post the syllabus, related websites, and other class materials on a class website.

**Class Requirements:**

All reading should be done before each session to facilitate discussion. Required course assignments include the following: 1) class participation; 2) two quizzes; 3) a applied research project; and, 4) a final examination.

1) **Class Participation:** Class participation is an essential component of the requirements for successful completion of this class. Points for class participation are not simply guaranteed by attendance; participation consists of being present in class, reading all assignments prior to the beginning of class, and being an active member in class discussions and presentations. In addition, there will be some class activities, case analyses, and discussions. Class participation is important, because your presence and contributions are a vital part of a successful class. Interaction with others is as important a part of the learning experience as is the material being studied.

2) **Quizzes:** There will be two quizzes held. These will cover all the material in class up to the date of the quiz. It will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and short essay questions.

3) **Final Examination:** The final examination will consist of short essay questions.

4) **Applied Research Project: Disaster Case Analysis:**
   Students should select a major U.S. or international disaster and prepare a written analysis (15-20 pages in length) including bibliography. Students should be prepared to provide a 5-10 minute over in class during the last class session. Using library and internet sources, the analyses should assess the state of knowledge about the disaster and provide an analysis that includes:
   a) a brief (1-2 page) description of the disaster and the emergency management effort;
   b) the nature and location of the disaster (i.e., natural or technological/man-made);
   c) the number of human casualties and amount of property loss.
   d) social and economic demographics and vulnerabilities of the area
   e) the government(s) having jurisdictional responsibility and involved in the disaster response and recovery effort;
   f) the involvement of nonprofit and for-profit actors in the response and recovery effort;
   g) the major planning and policy issues raised—e.g., lack of mitigation effort, inadequacy of preparedness, response failure, recovery problems; and
   h) the disaster planning the community had undertaken prior to the incident.

The assignment of points and the grading scale is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied Research Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Academic Honesty**

All the work that you submit must be your own. Plagiarism is a serious violation of the student honor code and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism will result in an “F” on the plagiarized paper, a possible “F” in the course, and may also lead to dismissal from the University. For more information on this issue, please read the recommended student guidelines at http://www.fau.edu/caupa/pdf/ethics_student_guidelines.pdf.

**Students with Disabilities**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and follow all OSD procedures.
Course Topics:

Week 1: Introduction: Hazards and Disasters: Planning and Policies

- Instructor and Student Introductions
- Course and Syllabus Introduction and Discussion
- Discussion of Course Objectives
- Video clip of Recent Disaster to Generate Discussion on Course
- Explanation of Course Requirements
- Ice-breaker Exercise for Students

Recommended Readings For the Instructor:

- Articles from the Public Administration review special issue: Public Administration Review, Vol. 45, Special Issue: Emergency Management: A Challenge for Public Administration (Jan., 1985). Includes the following articles:
  - Emergency Management: A challenge for Public Administration. WJ Petak
  - A Framework for Integrated Emergency Management : D McLoughlin
  - Managing the Emergency response : TE Drabek

Module 1: Disaster Mitigation Policies and Planning

Week 2: U.S. Disaster Policies: History and Institutions:

Required Readings:

- W. Waugh, Living with Hazards: Chapter 2.
Recommended Readings:


**Week 3: Mitigation Planning and Policy Strategies: Local, State, and Federal Level**

Required Readings:

- Waugh. 2000. Living with Hazards, Chapter 5

Recommended Readings:

- Burby, Raymond (Ed.). 1998. Cooperating with Nature (Chapter 4)

**Week 4: Measuring and Mapping Vulnerability**

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:

- NOAA Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (RVAT) - http://www.csc.noaa.gov/rvat/rvat.html
Module 2: Preparedness and Planning

Week 5: Social, Economic, and Political Vulnerabilities

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Related Readings on Climate Change and Vulnerability:


Week 6: Community Resilience

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:

- From FEMA.gov “Building disaster resilient communities”. Link : training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/edu/docs/hazdem/Trends-Building%20Disaster%20Resilient%20Communities.doc - 2006-12-04

Week 7: Emergency Management Planning

Required Readings:


As a sample for analysis: A comprehensive emergency management plan of the town of West Tisbury, MA http://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/Documents/Emer-mgmt-docs/CEMP1.pdf

Recommended Readings:
Week 8: Communication and Risk Management (Policies and Plans)

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:

Module 3: Disaster Response: Planning for Response

Week 9: Emergency Planning

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Recommended Activity:

Class visit to the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with a tour and guest lecturer from the EOC.

Week 10: Supporting Emergency Response Operations using Geospatial Technologies

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:

Week 11: Collaboration and Coordination in Emergency Response Planning & Management

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:

Module 4: Disaster Recovery and Rebuilding

Week 12: Recovery Time-frames and Differential Recovery Rates

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Week 13: Long-term recovery

Required Readings:

  http://www.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1616&context=jhsem&sei-redir=1#search="long-term+disaster+recovery"
  http://www.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1711&context=jhsem&sei-redir=1#search="disaster+recovery+time-frames"

Recommended Readings:

**Week 14: Post-Disaster Recovery Planning and Reconstruction**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**

Week 15:  Post-Disaster Housing Planning

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Week 16:  Final Exam and Project Presentations
References:


